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In Address
by

Franklin



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AN

A D D R E S S

IN COMMEMORATION

OF THE

I N D E P E N D E N C E

OF THE

UNITED STATES,

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A D D R E S S.

MY FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS,—I hope you have not assembled here to-day with any excited expectations, that by any effort of mine, I can add to the liberal tribute of gratitude and joy, with which you are accustomed to meet the return of this festival. From the cradle of our infancy we have been familiar with the story of the events, which gave existence to this great nation. Our reflections upon it, our recital of its history has often been, rather an exercise of fancy, than of the understanding. Connected as we are by the ties of relationship with the actors in the revolution, we become, as it were, ourselves mingled in its events, and thus we magnify its importance with all the fascinations of self love.

These remarks are not made to detract any thing from this momentous epoch in the history of our country, but to illustrate the difficulty of properly discussing it. No person can appreciate more highly than myself that true spirit of freedom which gave it birth, or that devoted patriotism and gallantry which sustained the contest. Such are my own impressions of its importance, that I feel myself inadequate to do justice to the reflections which its contemplation excites in my own mind, much less can I hope to do more justice to yours. If I can but direct the current of your thoughts to a proper consideration of the great principles, in the maintainance of which our struggle for independence had its origin, it is all I can expect, or shall aim to accomplish.

You all know that the first settlers of New-England were induced to leave their native country in search of religious freedom. They belonged to the sect of Puritans, dissenters from the established church of England. Influenced by a spirit of intolerance, almost universal in that day, which, in the present age, a more enlightened reason has corrected, the government of their own

country prohibited to them the free exercise of their religion. For this they encountered the perils of the sea, which were great in the then imperfect state of navigation, the inconveniences of settlement in a wild and uncultivated country, and the terrors of famine and of the savage.

The government of the colony, in its infant state, was of a patriarchal character, deriving its authority more from the profound respect and confidence reposed in their leaders, than from any civil compact. At first, the number of the colonists was so small and the limits of the settlement so contracted, that they could well transact all the more important public affairs in a general assembly. As the colony, however, increased rapidly in numbers and in extent, this became impracticable. The legislative authority was accordingly confided to a representative assembly, chosen regularly by the colonists at fixed periods. The transactions and civil relations of the colonies becoming more various and extended, the legislative assemblies acquired a proportionably enlarged jurisdiction, and exercised a more important and responsible superintendance of the public concerns. By an interchange of sentiments and information between individuals from all parts of the several colonies, through the medium of the Assemblies, an exact knowledge of public feeling was acquired. This imparted also a knowledge of their resources, and at the same time effected an unity of opinion on all topics touching their political privileges, which could give to those resources the most vigorous action. To these advantages of political organization was added a higher degree of education both literary and moral, and more extensively diffused among the great body of the people, than had hitherto existed in any other widely extended community. These various causes contributed to form a people not only capable of self government, but to infuse into their minds that moral courage requisite to sustain them in the mighty conflict, without which it was apparent that the mother country would not relinquish that dominion, which was considered the richest jewel in the crown.

Such was the situation of the New-England colonies and the character of the inhabitants, at the period when the parent country claimed to exercise the power of levying taxes and duties upon them without their consent. The exercise of that authority was resisted, not so much for the reason that any immediately oppressive burthen was endeavored to be impos-

ed, as for the declaration of a principle of government, which, in time to come, might limit the measure of taxation only by the ability of the people to contribute. It is clear that such a principle, if admitted, would have reduced this country to the condition of a Roman province, to be plundered at the sovereign will of King and Parliament, and to minister with its resources to all their multiplied schemes of ambition. But, thanks be to Heaven, there were sagacious spirits in that day, who discovered the cloud in the horizon, when it was no larger than a man's hand—who did not wait until it had overspread the whole Heavens with its threatening ruin. Yes, my fellow citizens, there was Hancock, the Adamses, Franklin, Henry, Jefferson, and Lee, who could snuff the approach of despotism in the tainted breeze and meet it fearlessly in whatever questionable shape it might come.

We cannot properly estimate the real characters of the leaders in the Revolutionary contest and the purity of their motives, without considering the relations which they sustained to the government, whose claims of power they resisted. They were almost without exception men of the greatest wealth, and of the most distinguished talents, in the colonies. By adhering to the British Government, they might have enjoyed their possessions without severe exactions, and many of them might have justly expected to receive the honours and emoluments of the first offices in the gift of the crown. Instead of yielding to these allurements, they placed at hazard their private fortunes, the security and the hopes of their families, and even their lives and their fair fame; for misfortune in their enterprise, instead of conferring the meed of patriotism, which attaches to success, would have stamped their efforts with the ignominy of treason. A responsibility even greater than this rested upon the Congress that proclaimed the Declaration of Independence. The blood of their fellow citizens, which must necessarily flow freely in the progress of the desperate conflict which was to follow, would in the opinion of posterity be upon their heads, according to the final issue.

There is one fact immediately connected with this subject, which ought to be more generally known. At one moment, during the discussion of this momentous question in the Continental Congress, some of the most ardent friends of liberty conscious of its overwhelming importance began to hesitate and incline to timid—perhaps it might be better said—to pru-

dent counsels. As a just tribute to the memory of John Adams, it should be told to every American citizen, that in this important exigency, he urged the adoption of the measure with all the energies of his mind and with all the powers of his eloquence. After stating fully the reasons of policy in favor of the declaration, he is said to have concluded his argument in language of the following animated and intrepid character.

“ Sir, I know the uncertainty of human affairs, but I see, I see clearly, through this day’s business. You and I, indeed may rue it. We may not live to the time, when this declaration shall be made good. We may die ; die, colonists ; die, slaves ; die, it may be, ignominiously and on the scaffold. Be it so. Be it so. If it be the pleasure of Heaven that my country shall require the poor offering of my life, the victim shall be ready, at the appointed hour of sacrifice, come when that hour may. But while I do live, let me have a country, or at least the hope of a country, and that a free country.

“ But whatever may be our fate, be assured that this declaration will stand. It may cost treasure, it may cost blood ; but it will stand, and it will richly compensate for both.— Through the thick gloom of the present, I see the brightness of the future, as the sun in the Heavens. We shall make this a glorious, an immortal day. When we are in our graves, our children will honour it. They will celebrate it with thanksgiving, with festivity, with bonfires, and illuminations. Sir, before God, I believe the hour is come. My judgment approves this measure, and my whole heart is in it. All that I have, and all that I am, and all that I hope, in this life, I am now ready here to stake upon it ; and I leave off as I begun, that live or die, survive or perish, I am for the declaration. It is my living sentiment, and by the blessing of God it shall be my dying sentiment ; Independence now ; and Independence forever.” His bold and determined counsel prevailed. The Declaration of Independence, as presented by Mr. Jefferson, the chairman of the committee, to which duty he was appointed on the nomination of Mr. Adams, was unanimously accepted by Congress.

To no one individual is this country more largely indebted, than to John Adams, for his ardent and patriotic zeal in the crisis of its destiny. This tribute of just acknowledgement

should be the more cheerfully given, at this time, as the malignity of party feeling, to accomplish its despicable purposes, has attempted to detract from his well earned fame, as a sincere and devoted friend of civil liberty. The means which are employed for this purpose, are well worthy of the object to be effected, and fully illustrate the character of his accusers. Soon after the peace of 1783, while Mr. Adams was in England, as the minister of the confederated States, for the instruction of his countrymen in the principles of republican government he published a commentary on the constitutions of the several States. This work which contained copious historical details of most of the ancient and modern Republics, with sagacious reflections upon their excellencies and defects, was received with universal praise by the worthiest men of the time. It was not even suspected to contain a single maxim or comment inconsistent with the great principles of freedom, in support of which the contest had just ceased. After the lapse of nearly half a century, an individual has been found so regardless of the little candour or even that loose morality, which has heretofore been observed in the warfare of party discussion, as to attach his own name to a publication consisting of garbled extracts from this work, taking here a sentence and there a sentence, accompanied with remarks in the same spirit, so as entirely to pervert the obvious and intelligible meaning of the author. This fraudulent publication entitled "An exposition of the political principles of the Adams' family," some of you may possibly have seen, as I may venture to say, that there is scarcely a town or village in the country, to which numerous copies, by the aid of the franking privilege, have not been sent. It imparts no new charm to this species of political morality, that the great champion of English freedom, Algernon Sidney, by the same disingenuous combination of separate and unconnected passages from *his* Treatise on Government, was condemned for treason and suffered on the block. The same unprincipled spirit of lust of power, which unscrupulously consigned to ignominious death the illustrious martyr to English liberty, would now, without remorse, cover with infamy the sacred memory of the eloquent advocate of the Declaration of Independence.

You all know, my fellow citizens, with what consistent firmness and determination the patriotism of Congress was received and uniformly sustained by the whole country. The histo-

ry of our revolution furnishes one more illustrious example to those of earlier times, that a people determined to be free, and virtuous enough to be free, cannot be subdued. Their country may be laid waste, their towns may be desolated with fire and sword, freedom will start again into life and vigour from the slumbering embers of its own ruin. Like the Great Roman Commonwealth, liberty can never perish except by its own hand.

The Independence of this country having been acknowledged by the peace of '83, the scarcely less difficult task remained of establishing it upon a permanent basis. The articles of confederation, so long as they were sustained by the states, under the sanction of a sense of self preservation, answered sufficiently well all the purposes of government. But when assailed by the rivalships of state jealousies, and by the competition of trade and mercantile speculations, the hitherto existing bond of Union was found to be insufficient. In forming such a constitution as was adapted to the exigencies of the country, many serious difficulties were to be encountered—the efforts of small states to retain the advantages of sovereignty—the reluctance of large states to give up any portion of the weight and influence incident to extent of jurisdiction and excess of population—the claims of the southern states arising out of a large population of a peculiar character—add to these, a general prejudice, almost co-extensive with the country, against divesting the states and clothing the Federal Government with the important powers of peace and war and an exclusive control over the revenue arising from indirect taxation. It was naturally to be expected, that these causes, of themselves, should awaken the sympathies, and perhaps even arouse the passions of many citizens, who were zealously attached to the sovereign rights and powers of the states. But the distribution and limitation of the powers conferred upon the general government, more than all other considerations combined, contributed to give to those jealousies and prejudices a keener edge.

The convention, delegated to the duty of proposing a form of government, composed of the greatest abilities and experience in the country, after the most anxious, patient and mature deliberation, unanimously offered to the consideration of the people for their adoption a constitution, which, probably, the favorite of none, but formed in a spirit of compromise

andanity, was acceptable to all. It is a sufficient evidence of its excellencies and of its adaptation to the necessities and the wishes of the country, that, during a period of nearly forty years, it has been altered in only one essential particular, the manner of choosing the President and Vice-President. And it is now admitted by most of those, who urged that amendment, that, in that respect, it may have been altered without being improved.

But, however perfect in theory it may seem to us, who have seen its benefits in experience, it was not at all surprising, that different minds operated upon by different motives and views should entertain discordant opinions of its merits. We all know from our own observation of public affairs, that a great political measure will rarely unite in its favour a perfect harmony of the popular will. Difference of sentiment may arise from different causes—the impulses of ambition—the efforts of selfish and unprincipled men, who hope to rise to eminence in periods of high excitement, from which virtuous talents are inclined to retire,—sometimes, from rival jealousies—and often, from an honest variance of opinion. All these may have contributed to call into action the warm controversy, which agitated the country in relation to the proposed new constitution. At the present day, it strikes us a matter of surprise, that it required the greatest exertion of talent and personal influence to procure the acceptance of that charter, which we now admire, and almost venerate.

You may not be aware, my fellow-citizens, that the contest was scarcely less eager in New-Hampshire than in other states. It had already been adopted by eight states, and it only required the concurrence of ours to give it effect. Since that time, no question has probably occurred in our Legislative Hall, which has more deeply awakened the anxieties of the friends of national liberty. After a long and interesting discussion, an interest intensely magnified on account of its influence upon the future fortune of the whole country, the assent of New-Hampshire was yielded by a majority of only eleven votes in the whole number of 103. The variety of sentiment, which prevailed in relation to the propriety of adopting the constitution, receiving, as it now does, the warmest eulogies of all, is an instructive commentary upon the error of human opinions. At least, it should admonish us how fallible our decisions may be on questions viewed through the medium of

passion and prejudice, under an excitement of popular feeling, or by any other test than that of a sober and enlightened judgement.

It should be remembered, that on this occasion, for the first time, was witnessed the bitterness of political strife—then, was sown the seeds of those internal divisions, which have, at times, extinguished the charities of social intercourse, and almost annihilated the impulses of patriotic feeling. As the evils apprehended from the operation of the constitution were not realized, the fears of the great body of the people were dispelled, and the asperities of the contest were nearly forgotten. It was not, until toward the close of Gen. Washington's administration, when the public mind was highly excited by an enthusiastic but, certainly, undeserved sympathy for the Revolutionists of France, in their conflicts with the other European powers, that the animosities of party contention were again exhibited. Such was the mistaken zeal of the time, that it required all the weight of personal character, which belonged to the illustrious father of his country, to maintain for this nation that position of neutrality in the European contests, which has ever since been considered as the polar star of our foreign policy. Washington, himself, great as were his claims upon the universal gratitude of the country, could hardly escape personal indignity. Even at the moment of his final retirement to the bosom of private life, there were found a very few persons in Congress, among whom I may be permitted to designate an individual that now aspires to the highest office in the nation, who refused to accord to the father of his country the respectful farewell of the national Legislature, because it expressed a hope, that "*his* illustrious example might be the guide of his successors."

In the administration of his successor, there were other causes which contributed still further to increase the animosities of party—the difficulties with France, arising out of her aggressions upon our commerce—the necessarily augmented expenditures of the Government, and the consequent increase of the burthen of taxation; and, more than all, the never slumbering jealousy of a certain portion of the Union. It ought not, however, to be forgotten, that New-England did not distrust either the ability or the patriotism of Mr. Adams. The Legislature of New-Hampshire, at that period, with great unanimity expressed its entire confidence in both, and its approbation of the measures of his administration and of Congress.

Among those, who concurred in this expression were found many, who have afforded an efficient support, at all times to the honest efforts of the General Government.

Our collisions with the French Government were, however, soon adjusted, and the causes of discontent disappeared. For some years after the commencement of the present century, during an early period of the wars which desolated a great part of the European continent, the free commerce of the world seemed to be reserved for the exclusive enjoyment of our favoured country. The disastrous condition of other nations furnished a ready market for almost all the abundant productions of *our* soil. In the supply of their necessities, we seemed to encounter no rivalry or competition except with ourselves. A tide of full and unexampled prosperity, such as no other country had ever witnessed, rolled in upon us its golden flood. The ardour of civil discord, too, was almost forgotten in the general prosperity. That political tolerance inculcated by Mr. Jefferson in his inaugural address, "We are all Federalists—We are all Republicans," had almost attained to a practical illustration. But this bright picture was soon to be reversed. Whatever might be the mutual hostile spirit of the contending nations, it was hardly to be expected that either of them should view with complacency the harvest of successful commerce, which we were gathering most abundantly from the misfortunes and calamities of both. Then commenced that series of indirect and of direct aggressions both of England and France upon our foreign commerce, which were not less destructive than the hostilities of open war; and by the former power, the still more offensive invasion of the personal rights of our citizens. Every effort of expostulation and remonstrance was tried by our Government in vain. The more questionable policy of withdrawing our navigation from the ocean was also resorted to, and that, too, failed of attaining the object. The only and last alternative that remained was quiet submission to repeated insult and indignity or an appeal to arms. To the latter our Government did appeal reluctantly but necessarily. You all remember the party virulence which the administration of that day were obliged to contend with. For that party I, certainly, am no apologist. All history shews us, that political associations in times of high excitement, whether arising from causes real or imaginary, are unjust and often unscrupulous as to the means of accomplishing their objects. But it should be

remembered, that party zeal, even when directed against the administration of the Government under which we live, does not necessarily imply a want of patriotism.

There are few of us, who have learned the mutability of public opinion in other free countries—aye more—who have observed it in our own free country, and would not be reluctant to stigmatize the most virulent political enthusiasm with the odium of treason. It is one of the great blessings of a free government—that its citizens may differ in opinion and the country be safe—that even error and delusion may have a momentary triumph, without uprooting the foundations of liberty. But civil dissensions, although they may be consistent with the safety of the republic, are, nevertheless, dangerous, and must be considered by every man, who values its institutions or derives any pleasure from the harmony of social intercourse among his fellow citizens, as a great evil.

I appeal to the experience, to the recollection of you all, if you did not consider the few past years, when you could meet your fellow citizen, your neighbour, without an averted eye, lest an interchange of cold civility might abate something from party bitterness—when you could come together in your little political assemblies, without encountering strange, uncouth, and hitherto unheard of epithets of reproach; yes, more, when your fellow citizens, in the pursuits of private life, and among them, those, who have shared largely of your respect, esteem and honours, were not exhibited in caricature in the newspapers of the day—in fine, when party appellations were forgotten, but *your country* remembered; I appeal to your candid judgement, if those were not better days of the Republic.

However much may be our regret, our senses convince us, that those days have passed by. The “era of good feelings” has now become a theme for scandal. Independent electors, who have heretofore scorned to sacrifice their free suffrages, are now called upon to be classed and drilled like standing armies, and to move only in submission to the command of some self constituted leader. It may be well for us, if such a state of things shall not be succeeded by standing armies of another sort.

Perhaps it may not be without instruction, for a few moments, to pass in review upon some recent political events, and to inquire into the source of that high fervour of political excitement which all must acknowledge to exist.

At an early period after Mr. Monroe's second election as President, many of the leading newspapers in New-England and in other parts of the country, nearly at the same period and as if by concert, expressed a preference for Mr. Crawford, as Mr. Monroe's successor. As the public mind in New-Hampshire had fixed upon Mr. Adams for that important station, recommended as he was by his talents, his long course of public service in subordinate civil offices and by the distinguished ability with which he had uniformly sustained himself in those offices, Mr. Crawford's claims produced but little impression, although industriously advocated by the newspaper having the most extensive circulation in the State. There were, also, it is well known, two other competitors, Gen. Jackson and Mr. Clay. The advocate of Mr. Crawford in this State laboured zealously to prove that he was the exclusive Republican Candidate, although Mr. Crawford by his language, and in his official conduct had expressly disavowed that character;* while at the same time he denounced his present favourite candidate, as having no proper qualifications for the office. By other journals, now not less zealous in the cause of Gen. Jackson, his success was then deprecated "as a curse to the country."† Neither of the candidates being elected, Mr. Ad-

* Mr. Crawford's liberal sentiments on political subjects were well known, and had recommended him much to the good opinion and favour of very many who had been the active supporters of the federal party. His liberality was specially manifested in one instance, in his official conduct, as Secretary of the Treasury.

A Collector of the Customs had been appointed at one of the principal ports in Rhode-Island, (at Newport it is believed,) and in making appointments to the subordinate offices of the Customs, the Collector, instead of re-appointing two of the old incumbents, who were federalists, had appointed others, of the Republican party. Information of it being given to Mr. Crawford, he ordered the former officers to be restored immediately.

The correspondence, which occurred between Mr. Crawford and the Collector on this subject, was published at the time, and fully discloses Mr. Crawford's tolerant views in relation to former party distinctions. It did not, however, deter those who are now sounding the alarm of federalism most loudly from giving to him their zealous support.

† Let the Journals alluded to speak for themselves. "We cannot consent," said the Richmond Enquirer, "to lend a hand towards the election of such a man as General Jackson. He is too little of a Statesman, too rash, too violent in his temper, his measures too much inclined to arbitrary government, to obtain the hum-

ams, Gen. Jackson and Mr. Crawford having the highest number of votes, the election, by the House of Representatives was limited to one of those. Although Gen. Jackson had the largest number of electoral votes, Mr. Adams had received, by many thousands, the largest number of suffrages of the free-men of the United States. Mr. Adams, on the first balloting

bble support of the Editors of this paper. *We could deprecate his election as a curse upon our country.*"

"General Jackson," said the New-York Evening Post, "from the moment he was entrusted with command, has avowedly and systematically made his own will and pleasure the sole rule and guide of all his actions. He has suspended the executive, legislative, and judicial functions, with military sway. He has insulted the executive of the United States; spurned its authority; disregarded and transcended its orders. He has usurped the high prerogative of peace and war, entrusted by all nations to the sovereign power of the State, and by our Constitution, to Congress alone! He has abrogated the known laws of nations, and promulgated a new code of his own—conceived in madness or folly, and *written in blood!* He has, in fine, violated all laws, human and divine."

Said the Albany Argus, "He, (General Jackson,) stands, in the minds of the people of this State, at an *immeasurable distance* from the Executive Chair; that *his habits*, aside from his polities, are *quite too summary for that.*"

Alluding directly to Gen. Jackson, the present editor of the New-York Enquirer said, "that it would be a sin to confer either the first or second office in this Union on a man who sets laws, constitution, party, friends, and principles at defiance!"

Such were the opinions inculcated by these journals, before they started upon the race of opposition to the present administration. Mr. Adams and Mr. Clay were both before the country as candidates for the Presidency at that time. When have these journals expressed similar opinions respecting the two last individuals, even though vexed by the provocations of party contention? Does it not become good citizens looking to the best interests of their country, to inquire whether the success of a party, having such a leader as these journals, the avowed organs and mouth-pieces of that party, have described General Jackson to be, will afford more security to their personal rights, to the republican institutions or the general prosperity of these United States?

This is a question which we are called to act upon and decide, under that high responsibility which attaches to the exercise of a privilege, involving not only our individual rights but those of all our fellow citizens. In the choice of a chief magistrate, not only duty to ourselves, but the higher obligation of duty to our whole country and to the cause of republican liberty, requires us to make a *wise choice*. Let this be the sanction under which our suffrages may be given, and our country will continue to be, as it is, safe, prosperous, and happy.

in the House of Representatives, received the votes of thirteen States and was elected President. I well remember, that the intelligence of that event was received with almost universal satisfaction in this State. The favourite candidate of New-Hampshire had been elevated to that dignity, to which we all acknowledged that his abilities and his long faithful services had given him just title. But, even before he was invested with the authority of office, opposition rallied its forces made up from fragments of all parties, supporters of each of the disappointed candidates, many of them before that period entertaining toward each other the most bitter personal and political enmity, Federalists and Democrats, those in favour of a liberal construction of the constitution and those who would limit its operation to the narrowest sphere of action, those who would encourage the industry of the country by a just protection against foreign competition and those who boldly avow it as a maxim of politics on the floor of Congress, *that since 1820 "they have purchased nothing north of the Petapsco, and so help them God, they never will,"* chiming all together in one discordant harmony of effort and resolve "to put down the administration, though pure as angels." Starting upon a course so unexampled, it was supposed that the moral sense of the great body of the people might be disgusted, and thus it became necessary to invent some plausible excuse. Accordingly a letter was prepared, purporting to be the production of George Kremer, although by his own confession he was not the real author, charging Mr. Adams and Mr. Clay with bargain and corruption in relation to the election. This letter, dated sixteen days after Mr. Adams was elected, was sent to Philadelphia to be published in a newspaper, which was chiefly supported by funds supplied by the intimate friend and biographer of Gen. Jackson. Mr. Kremer, then a member of the House of Representatives, having acknowledged himself responsible for the contents of the letter, Mr. Clay demanded an investigation of his own conduct by that body. A committee was appointed for that purpose, and the pretended author of the letter declared his readiness to support the truth of the charges contained in it, but upon further consideration he denied the competency of the House to institute the inquiry, and so declined appearing before the committee. From the subsequent developement of this business, there is good reason to believe that the disappointed rival candidate of Mr. Adams.

was too intimately involved in this affair, and that it was apprehended, if too closely investigated, it might recoil upon the *real fabricator* of the calumny. At a later period and in an unfortunate moment, Gen. Jackson in presence of a number of his friends repeated the same charge, pointing it more particularly against Mr. Clay. One of those gentlemen, possessing more zeal than discretion gave immediate publicity to the declaration of his supposed injured friend. Mr. Clay, in a tone of manly and indignant defiance, demanded the proof.— Mr. Buchanan was then appealed to to confirm the charge, and with what success? He promptly denied the whole matter, so far as it pertained to Mr. Clay and Mr. Adams.* From all the disclosures made concerning this subject, it appears that the corruption was all on the other side. For Mr. Buchanan, before the election of Mr. Adams, and probably after his interview with the General, declared in the presence of Mr. Clay and a number of other gentlemen, that if Gen. Jackson, should be elected, he could very readily determine who would be the Secretary of State, and that the person who would be selected was then present. This declaration of a warm partisan of Gen. Jackson, was, undoubtedly, intended to have its influence, and such was the construction then given to it. The character of Mr. Clay, however, was mistaken. His public conduct proceeded from higher and purer motives. He needed not the influence of the low arts of intrigue or of the baser act of corruption to elevate him to any station to which talents or eminent services are an adequate passport.

What pretences were then resorted to to sustain this unfounded imputation? Why, it was this course of argument: Mr. Clay had voted for Mr. Adams and the latter had nominated the former to the Senate, as Secretary of State, which nomination was approved by five-sixths of that body. The conclusion which the justice of opposition makes is, not that the person recommended was honest and capable, but, that it was the result of a corrupt bargain. Do they not know that

* The following is an extract from Mr. Buchanan's Speech, in the House of Representatives, during the last session of Congress.

"Before, however, I commence my reply to that gentleman, (Mr. Everett,) I beg leave to make a few observations upon the last Presidential Election. I shall purposely pass over every charge which has been made, that it was accomplished by bargain and sale, or by actual corruption. *If that were the case, I have no knowledge of the fact;* and shall, therefore, say nothing about it."

the same judgement would condemn Mr. Jefferson to a like infamy, for the appointment of Mr. Madison to the same office of Secretary of State, the latter having voted for Mr. Jefferson in the electoral college of Virginia; for the appointment of Mr. Gallatin to be Secretary of the Treasury; of Mr. Claiborne, Governor of Mississippi Territory; and of many other persons to other important offices all of whom voted for Mr. Jefferson in the House of Representatives? Would the enemies of Mr. Adams and Mr. Clay mingle in their ruin the fair fame of Jefferson and Madison and others. Associated as they have been in their common efforts to promote the good of their country, I cannot doubt that a candid and sensible people will pronounce a like judgement upon them all.

Another charge against Mr. Adams, which ought not to be passed without notice, relates to his accounts as a Foreign Minister. I am aware that it has been again and again confuted, but it is, nevertheless, asserted *daily* with all the confidence of truth. If you shew its falsity, it is repeated with the more assurance;—indeed, it seems to be the moral of the ancient fable of the Hydra, the serpent of many heads, of which if you extinguished one, its loss was immediately supplied by fifty.

In a few words, I will endeavour to give you a statement of the facts, as they really exist. It may serve the double purpose of disclosing the truth in relation to this subject, and, also, of furnishing an example of the justice, which has been extended to Mr. Adams by the party opposed to his administration.

In 1809 Mr. Adams was appointed minister to St. Petersburg, and, while residing there in that character, during the year 1813 the Emperor of Russia proposed to effect the restoration of peace between this country and Great Britain by a negotiation to be conducted under his mediation. Mr. Adams was appointed a commissioner to conduct that negotiation, in conjunction with Messrs. Bayard and Gallatin. Before that period Mr. Adams had received the usual outfit and salary which had been allowed to all our foreign ministers. As it was supposed by Mr. Madison, then President, that Mr. Adams would be obliged to incur additional expenses under his new commission, he sent to him an outfit of \$9000. Those expenses were actually incurred to a considerable extent. After the commission was opened before the representative of the Emperor, our government was informed that England

would not accede to the proposition, but would negotiate directly at London or Gottenburg. The latter proposal was accepted, and Messrs. Adams and Bayard were directed to repair to Gottenburg for that purpose, to be associated with Mr. Clay. Messrs. Gallatin and Russell were afterwards joined in the same commission. Mr. Adams performed this journey by sea, no other mode being then practicable, in the midst of winter, and, after a very hazardous navigation, he arrived in safety at Gottenburg. By mutual agreement the negotiation was transferred to Ghent, at which place, after a discussion of six months duration a treaty was concluded. During all this period Mr. Adams retained his commission as minister to the Russian Court, where his family still resided, and was subjected to all the expenses at that Court appertaining to his official character. For his services under the commission at Ghent Mr. Adams received nothing except his salary as minister to Russia, and the same contingent expenses which were allowed to his colleagues and are allowed to all foreign ministers. So the fact is, that Mr. Adams, for his services in negotiating the Treaty of Ghent, and for his services under the mediation commission, received \$9000 only. The other members of the commission received an outfit and salary each of \$18,000, neither of them for more services, two, for less.

Mr. Adams was employed in the service of his country abroad for many years, and in various important missions. To exculpate him more fully from the charge of having received extravagant sums of the public money, contrary to right or precedent, it may be useful to institute a comparison between *his* compensation and *those* paid to some of our other foreign ministers.

Mr. Monroe was absent four years and eight months, employed in four missions, in three different countries, and received \$82,000. In addition to this, he has received, by a special act of Congress in his favour, for certain items not allowed in the settlement of his account, including the interest more than \$19,000, which with the former sum amounts to \$101,000. Mr. Adams, for a term of service 40 days less, in four missions, in three countries, received \$75,000; making a difference in the accounts as originally settled of \$7000 in favor of Mr. Monroe, and ultimately of upwards of \$26,000. Upon the most accurate examination it will be found, that no one of our foreign ministers has received less compensation than Mr. Adams for like services.

We ought not to forget that the compensation of foreign ministers is established by law, and that their accounts are settled and paid at the Treasury, agreeably to an uniform construction as fixed by the Executive. If great salaries are paid to persons holding such employments, it is rather the fault of the law than of the persons receiving them. But it is far from being the fact, that the compensation is extravagant, perhaps not even liberal. It is less, by more than one half, than it was during the Revolutionary war, when we were straining every nerve to sustain a national existence; and yet in these prosperous times, after a lapse of almost 15 years, the humble compensation of \$9000 to Mr. Adams for negotiating that treaty of peace, the news of which thrilled every bosom in the land with ecstacy, for which and for its honorable conditions we stand more indebted to him than to any other man, has now become a byword and a term of reproach. My fellow citizens, may the time never come when we shall need the services of such able, faithful public servants; if misfortune, however, shall fall upon us, may we extend to them a richer reward of gratitude, least of all, may we spare them our reproaches.

We hear it often alleged that the present administration is extravagant and prodigal of the public treasure. As a tale the most absurd, by being often repeated, will always gain some partial credit upon our credulity, a charge of this sort without proof presented in a plausible shape may have imposed on *some candid* minds the appearance of truth. It has been said, that since Mr. Adams has been President, there has been an average expenditure of upwards of two millions a year more than during a like period of the preceding administration. Admitting this to be the fact, does it prove in the least degree the charge? Is it a maxim in the common affairs of individuals, that every increased expenditure without reference to the object is necessarily an indication of increasing prodigality? Do you not, as agriculturalists, drain your meadows, build stone walls around your fields, extend the boundaries of your farms, enlarge your barns and granaries, and, doing this from your increased and abundant income, your surplus wealth, does such application of your money denote waste or profusion? If such conduct be not censurable in the concerns of private men, must not the same argument apply with greater truth and propriety to the affairs of nations? A just

economy has ever been considered to be a wise and judicious expenditure of money. Let it be shewn, that there has been an unnecessary, useless or improper application of the public funds, and then, let censure be applied to those who have erred—whether it be the Executive or the Legislative Departments of the Government.

But the question is,—has the Administration been prodigal? The President, in both of his last messages, has urged upon the attention of Congress the observance of a strict economy. Estimates of the probable expenditures of each current year are annually prepared by the Secretary of the Treasury, under the direction of the President, and transmitted to Congress early in each session. Those estimates have been less during the administration of Mr. Adams than in that of his predecessor, by an annual average of more than a million and an half dollars. The objects to which the public funds are to be applied are specifically defined by Congress. If that body may choose to increase the number of those objects, or the amount to be applied to either of them, is the Executive or Congress responsible? The latter, most certainly. The Administration is accountable for the faithful application of the monies appropriated to specific objects, and for the prudent and honest exercise of discretion, in whatever respect it may be entrusted with such power.

It was the good fortune of the present administration during the last session of Congress, to be tried by a test in which prodigality or corruption could not hope to escape detection. A new member, having just left his constituents among whom all the tales of extravagance concerning the administration were current and familiar, and, like many honest but deceived men, believing them to be true, had no sooner taken his seat, than he thrust into the House of Representatives various resolutions of inquiry on this topic. As soon as these resolutions began to be seriously discussed and to excite an interest, the opposition were alarmed. A more shrewd partisan declared, that it was not *the accepted time* for inquiry and retrenchment,—in effect, that the party ought not to give the administration an opportunity, by an official investigation, to check the torrent of slanderous misrepresentation which was sweeping through the land, lest it might prolong the power of the present incumbent another term of four years, and attempted to arrest its further progress. This it could not do, without assuming a hazard-

ous responsibility. The investigation proceeded, under the auspices of a committee composed of five opposed to the administration and two in its favor, invested with power to examine witnesses on oath. A diligent and vigilant scrutiny, continued for four months by this committee, has produced a book of two hundred octavo pages. It cannot be expected, perhaps your patience is already exhausted, that within the limits of this discourse, I should enter into a detailed examination of the labors of that committee. I shall content myself with stating two or three facts, which may serve to illustrate the spirit by which a majority of the committee were guided.

It appeared by the Treasury accounts of the last year, that, of the fund placed at the particular discretion of the President, usually called *secret service money*, there had been disbursed about eight thousand dollars. It was known that Mr Cook, of Illinois, had been employed as a special agent of the Government to the Island of Cuba; and evidence of a rumor was introduced by the majority of the committee into their report, that he had probably received or might have expected to receive \$5,500 for his services in the capacity above mentioned. Here they proposed to leave the subject, no doubt expecting this shadow of probability to be impressed upon the public mind as the clear conviction of truth. The minority of the committee, composed of Messrs. Sergeant and Everett, desirous that the real facts might be made known, proposed to request the President to communicate, confidentially, information of the actual sum paid to Mr. Cook. This the committee refused to do, under the pretence that they would receive no information, which confidence should preclude them from disclosing to the House. To obviate this objection, it was afterwards proposed by the same gentlemen to ask for full and explicit information on the whole subject of Mr. Cook's mission to Cuba, to be communicated, confidentially, or not, to the House, as the committee might think proper. This, too, was denied by the majority of the committee, without assigning any reason. To give the majority of the retrenchment committee a still further opportunity of exhibiting their candour and impartiality, it was proposed by the minority, Messrs. Sergeant and Everett, to obtain, through the chairman, information from the Executive, what amount had been expended from this fund for commissions instituted under the last administration and perfected by the present. *This, too, was refused.*

Since the Report of the committee was published, the President, to rescue himself from the imputation which this partial disclosure might lead to, has directed the Secretary of state to report the objects and extent of the disbursements from this fund since the inception of his administration. It now appears, that 1500 dollars only had been paid by Mr. Adams for any commissions created by his discretion. Whatever other sums have been paid by him, were for services ordered and begun by Mr. Monroe, and accomplished, only, by Mr. Adams. That sum was received by Mr. Cook, and *is the only expenditure from the secret service fund originated since the 4th of March, 1825.*

I may be allowed to mention another act of the committee, as more completely illustrating the impartial merits of the Retrenchment investigation. After the report of the majority was prepared, it was desired by the gentlemen friendly to the administration, that a part of the report which animadverted upon certain acts of the Secretary of the Navy might be submitted to him for explanation. *This, too, was refused.*

What, think you, is the issue of this four month's effort of the Retrenchment committee? Simply this, to strike off the title pages in printing executive messages to the House—not of messages to the Senate, in whose printers, you recognize the editors of the Telegraph, assailants of the privileges of Congress and of officers of the Government. I think we may well agree, although perhaps for different reasons, with the chief of the opposition, *that the present time, is not the accepted time for retrenchment.*

I will leave this topic, with which you are undoubtedly wearied, and turn to a more agreeable theme. Under the protection of the government, your agriculture and manufactures enjoy a moderate and give promise of attaining to a much higher degree of prosperity. The policy that looks steadily to the protection of American industry, of every character, against the fluctuating and, consequently, ruinous competition of foreign labour and capital, seems now to be established upon a firm basis. The conditions of a liberal intercourse between nations, (and there should be none other) are a free reciprocal interchange of the produce of each. If restrictions upon commerce are imposed by other nations, the principles of self defence require that we should meet them with the like restrictions. If England refuses to receive our abundant

agricultural productions in exchange for her manufactures, shall we not manufacture for ourselves, and sustain our agriculture in the consumption of its products by our own artizans? This policy, the success of which the capacious mind of Mr. Hamilton anticipated nearly forty years ago, which Mr. Jefferson twelve years since, declared to be "as necessary to our Independence, as to our comfort," and exemplified his faith by his works, "in purchasing nothing foreign, when an equivalent domestic fabrick could be obtained," is fast attaining to the dignity of a settled maxim in our political economy.

In this way we shall relieve ourselves from that real dependence upon European policy, which the great Chatham was most of all desirous of inflicting upon the colonies, although he exerted all the powers of his commanding eloquence to give free scope to their thoughts and personal rights. Knowing the actual dependance which would exist in a necessity for the supply of English manufactures, *he* declared that "he would not suffer the colonies to manufacture a hob-nail." From having been the dependants, we are now the rivals of England in the arts of manufacture. Our export of cotton goods, the product of New-England labour chiefly, amounts to a little less than one million of dollars annually. You are all aware of the vast supplies of the same article for domestic consumption.

The woollen manufacture is of still greater importance, as our agriculture furnishes both the raw material and subsistence for the manufacturer. When we reflect that the woollen factories in the single town of Somersworth will consume the wool which might be grown upon a thousand farms having each an hundred sheep, and upon the proportionate increase of the consumption of that material, by a much greater increase of that species of manufacture, when we reflect upon the multiplied demand created by manufacturing labour in all its connexions for the productions of agricultural labour, we may well anticipate an abundant harvest of national prosperity. Its beneficial effects have been already tested and are visible in the improved appearance of our farms and houses, in the increased value of our lands, in the constant demand and liberal reward for labour, in the flourishing aspect of our villages and fields, in the activity and enterprise of our citizens. All these advantages are secured to us by that system of American policy which the wisdom of our government has heretofore promoted, and which has been cherished, too, with increased care

by the vigilance of the present administration. Let us see to it, then, that our high hopes are not cast down in an evil moment. Let those be supported by the country who support the prosperity and independence of the country. Our cardinal interests are safe in the hands of tried friends, in those of avowed enemies they can never be safe.*

The personal rights of our citizens, so far as the influence of the executive arm of the government extends, are protected by a just and impartial execution of the laws. Each of us may "sit down under our own vines and fig trees," in the quiet enjoyment of the fruit of our labours. It is true, we may some of us be annoyed by that strange and inexplicable spirit of party mania, which seems to pervade every thing around us, and, as it were, to detract something from the dignity of reason. It may, nevertheless, be one of those partial evils which are consistent with greater good. I will not believe, that the contest between Cæsar and the Republic is yet come; when the dissensions of party can only be quieted by the suppression of all parties and of liberty itself. On the contrary, I believe it is far distant. I would even hope, that in these, its best days, for virtue and purity, we may furnish no evil example for the future Cæsar. If other and evil days should come, however it may suit the temperament of other men's minds to side with Cæsar, I know well, you will be found where the freemen of New-Hampshire have ever been found,—on the side of liberty and the republic.

* See Note on the next page.

NOTE.

The policy of encouraging our manufactures by an increased duty upon foreign goods had its origin in the great inconveniences which were experienced throughout the whole country, during the last war, in consequence of the suspension of our trade and intercourse with Europe. After peace had been concluded, and the basis of our connexion with foreign powers, depending upon our own laws, came to be settled by Congress, it was considered a main object, that the country should be placed in such a situation as not to suffer as heretofore from the hostile regulations of foreign powers. Past experience suggested the propriety of giving a more efficient organization to the army, of increasing the navy, of more effectually fortifying the sea coast, and of furnishing ourselves with supplies of such articles as could be advantageously manufactured in this country and for which we had hitherto been dependent upon foreign nations. In arranging the Tariff of duties at that time especial reference was had to this latter object. The Middle and Western States, whose pursuits were most exclusively agricultural, considered their interests as particularly identified with the support of that policy, which has since been called the American System. The Southern States only in part concurred, and the New-England States, largely concerned in commerce, were almost unanimously opposed to it. It was, however, by successive laws adopted as a part of the national policy. In the faith that those laws would be sustained, a considerable portion of the capital of the New-England States had been withdrawn from other pursuits and invested in manufactures. Those who had thus engaged in these new enterprises, as it were at the instance and by the invitation of the Government, might well confide in its justice for protection against foreign counter regulations.

By the Tariff of 1824, a large additional duty was imposed upon foreign wool for the advantage of the American wool-grower, and a small, but not correspondingly increased duty was also levied upon woollen cloths. During the same year and after the enactment of our law, the English government reduced the duty on foreign wool to an amount nearly nominal. So that, while the English manufacturer paid almost no duty, (not exceeding a penny per pound upon wool of the finest quality) the American manufacturer was obliged to pay a duty of thirty-three per cent. upon foreign wool, constituting as it did a very considerable portion of his raw material, and regulating the price of all of it. Under such circumstances, it was not surprising that the American manufacturer could not sustain a competition with the English manufacturer, and was subjected to immense sacrifices, involving in some instances nearly his whole capital. From such inequality created by British legislation

they petitioned Congress to be relieved, by increasing the duties on woollen goods. No request, certainly, could be more reasonable. The government were bound to make effectual all the encouragement, which was proposed to be given to the manufacturer by the law of 1824, against the counter regulations of any foreign government. If such were not its duty, there would be hardly a single department of labour which could be secure against a successful foreign competition. A bounty upon exportation might glut our markets with Irish butter, potatoes or beef. It would be pronounced a weak and spiritless policy, that would submit to have our agricultural products excluded from our own markets by such foreign artifices. The woollens bill, which passed the House of Representatives in 1827 and was refused consideration in the Senate, by the casting vote of the Vice-President, was designed to provide against this injury. The continued suffering of that class of our farmers and manufacturers, concerned in the growth and manufacture of wool, pressed this subject again upon the attention of Congress at the last session. The state of the woollen, as well as of other manufactures was thoroughly investigated and ascertained by the testimony of well informed witnesses. This examination shewed that the woollen interest, comprehending a capital of nearly forty millions of dollars, was verging rapidly to an irretrievable ruin, attributable principally to the cause before mentioned. Relief must come soon, or it would come too late. By the power of the House this great interest was entrusted to the protecting care of a committee—manifestly hostile to it. The consequence was, that a bill was presented dealing out large favours to such departments of industry as did not need them—refusing all favour to that which was perishing for the want of bare justice—and upon other branches of trade imposing most grievous burthens. After a two month's discussion and efforts for amendment repeated again and again, until further endeavours to that purpose were evidently fruitless, the bill passed the House of Representatives substantially in the form in which it came from the committee. The majority in its favour, however, was very small, many of those most solicitous, I might say, even personally interested for protection to the woollen manufacture, voting against the bill, others, with the same views, voting for it, in hope that it might be made better in that and in other respects in the Senate. In this hope they were not entirely deceived. The bill was amended essentially in respect to the woollen manufacture, and in its amended form has become a law.

The Southern and South-Western States are now opposed to the whole manufacturing system; the former denying to the general government the power to make laws for the purpose of sustaining it. Entertaining these opinions, they did, nevertheless retain in the bill those provisions, confessedly the most obnoxious. Without their votes, the duties on coarse wool, such as cannot be grown in this country, on molasses, on hemp, on certain linen manufactures could not have been imposed, or the drawback on spirits distilled from imported Molasses have been taken away.

The great object of a tariff, aside from revenue, is to promote such branches of industry as are particularly adapted to our climate,

soil and population, or necessary to national security, and to counteract the injurious effects resulting from laws or decrees in aid of the interested policy of foreign powers. The people of New-England have never asked for the passage of laws to regulate private industry. They have always been averse to them. But having been invited, or rather compelled to invest their property in manufactures by laws enacted against their will, they may justly claim that those laws shall be faithfully executed. It is believed, that the last Tariff does nothing more in favor of the woollen manufacturer, than fairly to secure for him that protection which was intended to be given by that of 1824. But even this justice has been purchased with such onerous conditions, as to make it doubtful whether more has been gained than lost to New-England.

The sensibility created in the South by the last tariff, fashioned in its details as it has been by their own votes, is, nevertheless, such that even the Union of the States seem to be of little value, compared with the accomplishment of their own notions of public policy. A confederacy of certain States, interdicting commercial intercourse with their sister States, is seriously threatened, and, as the last resort, a crusade against Eastern cities and Eastern manufactures; intending, probably to verify the declaration of Mr Randolph,

“*Delenda est Carthago,*”

the modern version of which is, “Down with the Yankees.”

The Southern doctrine, as affirmed by legislative resolutions, teaches that protecting duties are contrary to the Constitution. Hence it becomes, in their view, not merely a measure of sound policy, but an injunction of Constitutional obligation, to repeal all protecting duties. This determination is distinctly avowed. The contrary policy of protecting and encouraging our own industry, which has been observed ever since the foundation of the government, commencing with the first act of Congress, who are now called upon to abandon in obedience, it is said, to the precepts of the Constitution. And what is the substance of this doctrine? Why, that we must buy of other countries, which refuse to buy of us—that we must submit to have our cattle, sheep, swine, beef, mutton, lamb, pork and flour prohibited in the foreign market, *provided cotton shall be admitted almost duty free*, or it, with these restrictions upon trade in the staple products of the Western, Middle, and Eastern States, they shall presume to manufacture even a “hob-nail,” that they must enter into competition with the immense capital of England, with its necessitous population, with its jealousy of our rising manufactures, which, a distinguished living British Statesman thought, should be suppressed although it might cost millions to effect it. A repeal of the protecting duties would surely accomplish this most desirable object for England, by permitting her to throw in upon us all her surplus manufactures, and thereby to create such fluctuations in price as would inevitably ruin our manufacturers. That done, she would have the exclusive possession of the market, and sell us her goods at her own prices. We should then stand in the same relation to her that a great part of Europe did to us, when nearly the whole continent was devastated by war and the staff of life was

ministered to its population by the American agriculturalist. When we perceive so portentous an excitement originating in so inadequate a cause, we may be excused for expressing a suspicion, that reasons of state may have induced our Southern brethren to prefer that their great staple should find its consumption in the workshops of Europe. Perhaps the manufacturing arts may cover New-England with plenty and the "busy hum of men," as they have other climates not more genial and other soils not more fertile. These may, possibly, give her that weight in the balance of the Union, which nature had otherwise denied.

Much more might be said on this important subject than would be admissible within the just limits of this publication. It is, however, of great moment, that we should not suffer this object of the highest interest to us to escape our jealous care. The policy of the government is now established, and may be preserved and prosper, if its guardianship be entrusted to those whose vigilance has steadily protected it. What prudent husbandman would commit a lamb to the wolf to be nursed and defended? This absurdity would be exemplified fully, if we were to commit our growing manufactures and improving agriculture, inseparably united as every man's experience proves them to be, to the keeping of those, whose maxims of national policy we know to be adverse to both of those branches of industry, as they exist with us.





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